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TLS

THE TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT

FRIDAY • 10 NOVEMBER 1972 • No 3688 • 12p

THE ART of the Victorians is returning to favour. A number of recent exhibitions—those at the National Portrait Gallery, church art and photography at the Victoria and Albert Museum and Pre-Raphaelites at the Petit Palais and Whitechapel, the Handley-Read collection at Burlington House, and smaller showings of individual painters in Liverpool, Sheffield and Newcastle—have provided us with the material for making a new judgment. What we need is a critical context in which to make it—a background of standards and explanations which will allow us to understand, without embarrassment or condescension, the strange and unclassical beauties of this period's art: the thronging crowds of Frith, the cramped and messy moral dramas of Holman Hunt, Millais's perverse combination of conscientious execution and senseless exploitation of sentiment, the strenuous activism of Ford Madox Brown against the lotus-smiling somnolence of Burne-Jones.

And this context is to be found, perhaps, in Ruskin. What aesthetic lies behind his movement from the Wordsworthian nature-poet to the epic of *Modern Painters* to the epic of *Seven Lamps of Architecture* and *Stones of Venice*, his abandonment of nature and therefore of painting for the sterner and more durable truths of architecture? Or behind his progress from the ecologist for the hazy impressionism of Turner to the champion of painstaking Pre-Raphaelite accuracy? And from this to dotting enthusiasm for the toddlers of Kate Greenaway? What gleams of sense can be discerned in the extraordinary unshumping incoherence of his late Oxford lectures? For there is always a rigorous method in Ruskin's critical madness. And how his own art related to that of his period, and to his critical ideas?

Driven by the energy of the multi-depressive, restlessly eclectic, reforming art criticism first into a branch of Wordsworthian lyric poetry, then into Miltonic or Gibbonian epic in *Stones of Venice*, Ruskin is a literary phenomenon whose only equal in his period is Dickens. There is little enough good criticism of Dickens, and almost none of Ruskin. Paul Walton's monograph is therefore to be welcomed: it gives a guide to his drawings which we can also use as a key to Ruskin's critical work and to some of the families of Victorian art.

Ruskin's criticism becomes great literature—though often, in its unrelenting restlessness, ceasing to be criticism—because it is ineluctably and eventually disrupted by the personal problems and torments. The criticism becomes a psychodrama, dramatizing his own mental and moral struggle and judgment. It is a struggle with intellectual and emotional difficulties. It is unique in writing which one might call deconstructive: a nervous energy and onslaught to that which created it. It is similar to that which created it, and like Hawthorne's *Mosses from a Great Aunty* it is in him a kind of self-destruction. It is a kind of self-destruction, and like Hawthorne's *Mosses from a Great Aunty* it is in him a kind of self-destruction. It is a kind of self-destruction, and like Hawthorne's *Mosses from a Great Aunty* it is in him a kind of self-destruction.

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John Ruskin: prose-painter

PAUL H. WALTON:

The Drawings of John Ruskin

134pp. Including 103 plates. Clarendon Press: Oxford University Press. £7.

arches ecstatically breaking into marble foam, and its images of Christ and his angels looking down indifferently on the sprawling profanity of the mean, narrow streets below.

Ruskin's drawings reveal something similar—here, too, exploration of the object becomes self-exploration. The geology of Lyell, for instance, led Ruskin, like Tennyson, towards a spiritual crisis which is dramatized in the destructive builders which litter the 1855 "Study from Turner's Golden Age"; here, and in the 1860 watercolour of the Mer de Glace at Chamounix (which is Mr. Walton's frontispiece), the scientific study of rock faces is shot through with anguish—a blinding line of snow, jagged rocks like the jaws of sharks, lone, suffering trees, everywhere an agitation of line as if pencil and brush shudder in recording the scene—in a way which suggests Leonardo's drawings of floods, which are at once scientific diagrams and terrifying visions of the deluge. A late drawing of the "Lily's dress necklace" curls towards us with the menace of a

prose Turner. His drawings of the falls of Schaffhausen catch the surge of the water, but it is in the prose description in *Modern Painters*, as Mr. Walton points out, that Ruskin's experience while drawing an aspen tree at Fontainebleau in 1844 is the beginning of this dedication to the detailed study of natural forms, a task which was both a scientific duty and an act of religious devotion. As described in *Præterita*, this occasion is made into a Wordsworthian spot of time, beginning to draw in a languid mood, Ruskin is unexpectedly taken out of himself and made to see into the life of things. The composition themselves into an "interpretation of the bond between the human mind and all visible things" and this—the fitting of the mind to external nature, as Wordsworth calls it—is the main preoccupation of *The Prelude*. As Wordsworth trudges away across the moor, strangely changed by his apparently inconclusive encounter with the leech-gatherer, or as Coleridge's wedding guest rises a sadder and a wiser man after meeting the mariner, so Ruskin returns "along the road-road feeling that it had led me far. Farther than ever fancy had reached, or theodolite measured". He has glimpsed eternity in an hour—this, transferred to Ruskin's critical prose, is the experience, at the heart of Romantic poetry.

But whereas the Romantics can accept the vague and temporary nature of the vision—the "dim and unremembered sense" of unknown modes of being—always fades into the flux of everyday, the nightingale flutters away, the person from Farlow knocks on the door, and "I fled that vision"—Ruskin, as a Victorian more perplexed by the difficulties of belief and more oppressed by his intellectual responsibility, has to lay hold on the revelation, pin it down, reach scientific certainty about it. Hence those

Elsewhere, in *The Elements of Drawing*, Ruskin recreates the dazzling luminosity of the Pre-Raphaelites, whose colours have an un-

earthly, eerie radiance because of their use of a white ground:

When white is well managed, it ought to be strangely delicious—tender as well as bright—like inland mother of pearl, or white roses washed in milk. The eye ought to seek it for rest, brilliant though it may be; and to feel it as a space of strange, heavenly paleness in the midst of the flushing of the colours.

This captures the atmosphere of Rossetti's "Childhood of the Virgin", in the Tate, or Tennyson's urn "clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful". There have been many prose poets in English; Ruskin is the only prose painter.

His drawings are an indication of Ruskin's exposed and difficult position as the link between the visionary world of Romantic poetry and painting and the more perplexed, anxious, doubt-ridden intellectual atmosphere of the Victorians. He has puzzlingly divided affluities. On the one hand he follows Turner—for instance in the poetic apparition of Amalfi, dreamily poised between a vivid sunset on the mountains and its reflection in the sea; as Mr. Walton points out, this 1844 watercolour takes a cautious pencil sketch made three years earlier and drenches it in the sublimity—it has the Byronic extravagance, the poetic rhetoric, of Turner's Italian pictures, for the sea is brought up to the foundations of the town for the purpose of reflecting the sunset; it is "Turnerian atmospheric level, all fire and air, iridescent and purged of baser matter."

On the other hand Ruskin conscientiously pursues truth to nature, prose fidelity as apart from poetic colouring. Mr. Walton singles out Ruskin's experience while drawing an aspen tree at Fontainebleau in 1844 as the beginning of this dedication to the detailed study of natural forms, a task which was both a scientific duty and an act of religious devotion. As described in *Præterita*, this occasion is made into a Wordsworthian spot of time, beginning to draw in a languid mood, Ruskin is unexpectedly taken out of himself and made to see into the life of things. The composition themselves into an "interpretation of the bond between the human mind and all visible things" and this—the fitting of the mind to external nature, as Wordsworth calls it—is the main preoccupation of *The Prelude*. As Wordsworth trudges away across the moor, strangely changed by his apparently inconclusive encounter with the leech-gatherer, or as Coleridge's wedding guest rises a sadder and a wiser man after meeting the mariner, so Ruskin returns "along the road-road feeling that it had led me far. Farther than ever fancy had reached, or theodolite measured". He has glimpsed eternity in an hour—this, transferred to Ruskin's critical prose, is the experience, at the heart of Romantic poetry.

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Where politics takes command

[illegible]

Machine-Building Industry in
People's China

7 65.

Foreign Trade of Mainland
1977. 14.
Shanghai University Press

his admission to the UN and President Nixon's trip to Peking have aroused world-wide curiosity about the country which Senator Proxmire, chairman of the American Congressional Committee on China, described recently as last May a "dark enigma and a political puzzle to world stability". The Beijing official explanation of the death of Lin Biao, Mao's former successor, has heightened the interest in Chinese affairs. Thus the situation in this country of the two volumes in the series of studies published under the auspices of the Chinese Social Science Research

Council's Committee on the Economy of China is timely.

Where "politics takes command", an assessment of important sectors of the economy can be just as revealing as the study of the political record. This is borne out by the two latest major surveys, written by outstanding experts in their respective fields (to which they have reported over the years in the *China Quarterly* and elsewhere). The machine-building industry, one of the most dynamic branches of the country's economy, is a good indicator of China's achievement during the past two decades when it grew from small beginnings at an average rate of almost 20 per cent a year to a major industry, serving the producer and consumer alike. The requirements of the nation's defence in 1960, six machine-ministry concerns with new building for their armed forces were added to the two ministries looking after civilisation needs. As China's rapid industrialisation shows, this large industrial bureaucracy has not been idle.

With Russian assistance the foundations of a modern machine industry were laid during the First Pla

the satisfaction of buyer and seller alike, though foreign traders have to get used to dealing primarily with civil servants, acting under ministerial instructions.

At the height of Sino-Soviet co-operation and Western strategic embargo, non-communist trading nations had to make do with one-third of China's total trade, providing a volume of trade of \$700m in each direction. The quarrel with Russia led to a reversal of the position, reducing China's trade turnover with other communist countries last year to less than \$500m or one-fifth of the total. In these figures, are based entirely on the statistics of China's trading partners. They tend to understate the share of China's trade with Japan, Hongkong and Western Europe while overstating that of China's trade with countries of the Common trading community. The commodity composition of China's foreign trade, though undergoing certain changes during the past twenty years, has not been affected too severely by the breach in Sino-Soviet trade. Capital equipment, denied by Russia, was soon supplied by Japan and Western Europe. Lately, two-fifths of China's exports have consisted of textile manufac-

Unlike the machine industry, foreign trade has never figured prominently among the Chinese planners' priorities. Accounting for one-twentieth of the nation's total economic output, imports and exports are little more than marginal items in the overall design to transform the country into a fully independent and self-reliant socialist state. In the words of a former Minister of Foreign Trade, "export is for import, and import is for the country's socialist industrialization". International division of labour does not enter China's concept of economic development. Foreign trade is, of course, a state monopoly, operating at home through trading corporations whose accounts are subsidized, where necessary, by budgetary allocations. Abroad, the two sides of foreign trade are conducted through the state-owned Bank of China. On the whole this system works to

tures, the remaining three-fifths being divided between foodstuffs and raw materials. On the import side, almost one-fifth of the total bill is accounted for by machinery and equipment, one-third each on manufactured goods and on raw materials respectively, and the remainder on grain and other foodstuffs.

While China's total foreign-trade is roughly in balance, fairly large deficits accrue in her trade with developed countries. These deficits are largely due to trading with Hongkong, Singapore and Africa. Like this year's congressional report, Feng-hwa Muh in his careful, well-documented study does not expect a substantial expansion of China's trade with the United States and other countries. He takes comfort from the fact that China is interested in such sophisticated equipment as Concord.

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separately; and in practice this division presents few problems since Malaya, the only important region of overlap, though generally considered "island", can also be "mainland" when necessary (as, for example, in the consideration of Anglo-French diplomacy over Thailand).

Mr Tate teaches history at the Malay College, Kuala Kangsar, Malaysia, and his *Making of Modern South-East Asia* was evidently designed with Malaysian sixth formers in mind. In practice it deserves a wider distribution than this. It is

means difficult to read, and ambiguity is provided with maps and tables. This should make a most useful work of reference; and one hopes that the further two volumes taking the story from the turn of the century to the present are of the same calibre.

Mr Waddell's *An Introduction to Southeast Asian Politics* is another work designed, one presumes, as a text for sixth-formers or undergraduates which also is of value as a work of reference. Mr Waddell, even more

Mr Tate sees that South-east Asia is really at least two quite distinct regions, the mainland and the islands, "each with a character and a dynamic of its own". The history of the mainland has been dominated by states which existed in the pre-European era and which survived it to reappear in some form or another as sovereign states in the post-colonial world. The islands, on the other hand, in recent times and very much under the influence of European or American colonial rule, have become modern states like Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines, for which it would not be easy to find relevant pre-European precedents.

Mr Tate, in *The Making of Modern South-East Asia*, has made no bones about adopting this two-part arrangement for his narrative of South-east Asian history from the Neolithic Age to the First World War. The islands of the First World War, he treated quite differently from the mainland, as treated quite

than Mr Tate, is inclined to see South-east Asia as "a mere political expression", though he does detect a number of underlying, geographical, economic, social and economic factors common to most modern South-east Asian countries, and he accepts the validity of a division into mainland and island states. The bulk of the book, after a brief discussion of general factors, is devoted to a country-by-country account of political evolution from up to 1965. This includes Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam (North and South), Burma, Malaysia and Singapore, Indonesia, and the Philippines. The work concludes with a short account of the nature of ideologies and the role of the military in various South-east Asian nations. All this, though, is a rather superficial and cursory survey, which could well be controversial, like those dealing with Vietnam, are refreshingly free from polemic.

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Chairs for future Chaucerians

NEVILLE COGHILL:

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332pp. Penguin, Paperback, 40p.

A Choice of Chaucer's Verse

Edited by Nevill Coghill.
235pp. Faber and Faber, Paperback,
£1.05.

There is a serious Indian shop-keeper in the Persian Gulf who once showed signs of wishing to kiss a lady's feet because she had once sat at the feet of the author of the Penguin *Canterbury Tales*; and the author himself recalls being asked solicitously, after the meeting of an East Anglian literary society, "And how is Mrs Chaucer? We are so sorry you had to leave her at home!" If this confusion obtains in the minds of millions of the people Nevill Coghill has introduced to Geoffrey Chaucer, there is reason for it. Professor Coghill may not be the poet Chaucer was, though he can be pretty good; but he has become the grand translator of Chaucer to this age because he has a good deal in common with his master besides the devotion of a disciple. He has the same quality of conveying delight in life that he attributes to Chaucer, a delight that is something more than mere jollity; they share, without embarrassment, that attitude to life which Professor Coghill pinpoints as "Christian cheerfulness", in the light of which comedy is as valid and serious an approach to things as tragedy, and more courageous.

This is comedy in its widest sense, which takes in not only the scurrillous

of the Summer but the high idealism of Troilus and what Coghill calls the Golden World of the aristocratic, chivalric and romantic world that burst into flower in England during Chaucer's boyhood. Coghill's English Association Address, *Chaucer's Idea of What is Noble*, attempts to define the guiding virtues of this world, virtues that are summed up in the word *gentillesse*: *chivalrie, trouthe and honour, freedom and curteisie, and wisdom*, "a certain intellectual grandeur, a capacity to think a high thought", which belongs to his youthful heroes as well as to Theseus. The Penguin *Troilus* and the Faber *Choice* enlarge on this less familiar, gentile side of Chaucer, and may if idealism remains in fashion among the young help to make it as well liked as the rumbler of the *Canterbury Tales*. The *Troilus* has already been heard twice on the radio. *A Choice of Chaucer's Verse* contains excerpts from both the *Tales* and *Troilus*, substantially as in the Penguin versions, but here and there livened up, and the punctuation made visible, or audibly, more dramatic; Professor Coghill's involvement with the stage and more recently television must have made him even more aware of the performance quality of Chaucer's verse. The Faber book takes us also into the world of the minor poems, equally serious and golden, leading off with the Avignon spring hunt of the *Book of the Duchess*, a most appealing translation.

Professor Coghill does not talk of translation but of "versification", and he would not want to think of himself as becoming a substitute for Chaucer. What he hopes to do is to provide "chairs for future Chaucerians": "one way of learning to skate with ease is to lean on a chair pushed over the ice before one; clumsy as the chair is, it gives support to self-confidence and stills trepidation in the future skater." In the Faber book, paraphrase faces the text across the page; the reader of the Penguin *Troilus* will have to find his own text. If one adopts the posture of a nervous skater and reads the Faber translation first in its own right, it certainly should arouse enough enthusiasm to try the next

time round one-handed. The selection of pieces is lively and varied; everyone will miss some favourite passages, but that can hardly be helped in a book of this modest size. There are some cuts, and on just a few occasions these can be misleading: the Prioresse, for example, loses an equal number of Chaucerian and Coghillian lines, but they do not in this instance happen to match, which is momentarily confusing. Occasionally, too, especially in Book III of *Troilus*, the translation is a bit odd: *God forgo his doth becomes* "God let him of his death" (who? in the context, Pandarus? hardly), and *whoso seeth you, knoweth you ful litte* hardly means "You are a lightweight—anyone would know". There are some curious attributions to speakers, which may be due to careless proof-reading, from which the Faber version is not free; and *Troilus's* line fictions of jealousy become even more improbable, with *she myght on hyrn have looked at the lest* turning up attached to Troilus and not to the imaginary Iloraste.

Comparing text and translation with an eye to those nervous skaters, though, one cannot help but be impressed all over again. Coghill is not only accurate, which after all one would expect: he reads like English poetry. It is a tougher task than it might at first appear, because the whole structure of English has changed. To get his rhymes, particularly in the couplet, Coghill is forced into far more enjambement than Chaucer alongside him. A straight-forward line like *The hennet of these flours newe and bright becomes* "flours"; the adjective can no longer conveniently follow the noun, in one of the appendices to *Troilus*, Coghill discusses some of the problems, as he confesses, is that "my tongue has simply lost that kind of music", partly because of the verse pattern, but largely for the obvious reason that in Chaucer's time English poetry could still make use of the ripling line. To get the same number of words into a modern line of equal length without adding new matter, Coghill

is reduced to some amusingly sixteenth-century shifts. Epithets seem the most susceptible: "greening May" for *spring May*, "palmer seeking stranger strands", and doubling up: one of Chaucer's most famous couplets becomes

Now with his love, now in his cold,
Alone, alone, with none for company

(In the *Mittler's Tale* the echo has become "All by himself, without company"). Endowments tend to proliferate: Pandarus consistently calls Criseyde "dear niece", and the old "darling" spoils the ceremonious gravity of Troilus's declarations. Then there are the fill-ins, the modern equivalents of *sooth to seyn*—"he didn't know, of course". Mostly they are justifiable in the context: "Palamon answered faintly and with guilt", (to the child-ish-jenous "And this is he that loves my Emily"). Often the extra stuff is taken up by a necessary gloss for those of us who, like the Franklin, "lack the jargon of astrology". Indeed, if one wants a really good explanation of what the magician in *Troilus* is up to, or what Theseus's chain of love speech is really about, he could not do better than to go first to Coghill's version.

The result seems to be that it is much more difficult to write a straightforward out-and-out line in simple vocabulary. The polysyllabic synonym creeps in, weightier, a little, though still good. *God loveth, and to love wol might wedde* becomes "God himself loves, my turns his countenance thence". From time to time he produces the perfect equivalent, *do not want a cure, I want to die*, says Troilus from between his teeth. One cannot help picking out for approval lines with what sounds like the true Chaucerian ring: "The humble nets my lady caught me by"; "I am no theologian, so perforce, Am silent: souls arn't mentioned in my source"; "But Christ, why burrow that to do it with?" (Gervase the smith, incidentally giving the whole game away). But the best most moving and impressive pieces of poetry in their own right, are the translations of the

complicated stanzas where Chaucer himself polysyllabifies. The *First of the Clerk's Tale*—
Griselda and her patience begot
—And Troilus's hymn to *Love*—
superb. The final stanza of the *Book of the Duchess*—
Thou One and Two and Three
That reignest ever in Three and
Incomprehensible,
all-comprehending.

Professor Coghill has a well-earned reputation for his translations of Chaucer, which go for the most part as well as they can. He has a comic sense, and a progressive relaxation of the usual rules of grammar and syntax. Obviously such qualifications—architects are not the pawns of history, and architectural fashions and attitudes change either overnight or at all gradually. Nevertheless certain characteristics and tendencies of the first and last of these three books are not hard to identify.

What happened in between, though, no one seems to doubt that it was in some way quintessentially Victorian and deserves the title of being called "High". The translators are quite in disarray. There is for one thing some difference of opinion about the personification of Street or Scott; but Professor Hersey makes no mention of the personification of the High Victorian Gothic. The other and he gives a major role to E. B. Lamb, about whom he writes in a book called *The High Victorian Movement*—that "his principles... belong to the thirties and forties rather than to 1860".

Professor Hersey tells us that one of the Victorian architects, churchmen to Christchurch, West Ham, is that it telegraphs its function with such sculptural vim". Functionalism is for Professor Hersey a cardinal element of High Victorianism. But was not Pugin a functionalist? Professor Hersey thinks not: in an "ecclesiastical church" the functions of its parts were not to be made plain with the porch symbolizing entry, the nave the broad of the congregation, the choir the priest, and so on. The architect's task is to repeat the principles set out in *The Ecclesiastical Architecture*. Professor Hersey's argument of Pugin is that for even if he has spent time with periodicals than with buildings. He writes of Pugin's "style" as a constant through his "many" Perpendicular churches (there are only two, or three, of any consequence, before 1840), and takes a symmetrical place westward tower, as the "ecclesiastical" in the sense that they are axial, symmetrical, and "expressive of fitness for their use and in view of the London and of the Victorian Gothic". But for Professor Hersey's historical schema—we are told that Pugin was not an associationist.

It is the central argument of Professor Hersey's thesis that the appeal of High Victorian Gothic and its main claims were not only to the aesthetic but to the moral. It explores a number of associations which he believes to have been characteristically Victorian. The architecture of the 1850s and 1860s, prominent among which is the "ecclesiastical" and sexual. The purely architectural associations are not far from being a "moral" and who moves from being a "moral" practitioner of the moral in the 1840s to a "moral" in the churches of the 1850s and in particular of the 1860s. He should have missed the beautiful delight in finding, if he saw San Anastasia at

Creaturely churches

GEORGE L. HERSEY:

High Victorian Gothic
234pp. Johns Hopkins Press (IBEC).
£6.75.

Verona, that he had got his Gothic principles right). But of religious associations, and religious impulses in architects and critics, we are given almost nothing. These associations, however, were plainly central, not only to Pugin, whose devotion to Gothic was part of his Catholicism and who makes a straightforward and explicit identification of Christian and pointed architecture, but to the Ecclesiologists and all the High Church architects as well. How can one explain the difference between Butterfield's All Saints, Margaret Street and Lamb's St Martin's, Gospel Oak, without bringing in the different churchmanship implied in the two designs? Formally the two churches had to answer to contrasting conceptions of the Anglican liturgy, and the comic and emotional appeal of each conception or reflects beliefs underlying these conceptions.

Professor Hersey will have none of this. He has made a good effort, he tells us, to turn himself into a Victorian: "Having saturated myself in Victorian criticism, I assume that the buildings act upon me as they were intended to." That, unfortunately, seems to be a non-sequitur; and though *Intention* is probably not crucial, it is an unjustified—and certainly unimproved—assumption that one can get oneself into the mind even of the Victorian critic. To be fair to Professor Hersey, it must be said that he offers to check his reactions against contemporary reports and often does so. The outcome is not a fact-free sea of unqualified praise, but a very impressive, though the details seem to pass unmentioned in the text, the explanation must be that Professor Hersey has not stood outside himself enough to see how much he is not a Victorian and in consequence how many hidden beliefs and assumptions he neither shares nor takes fully into account. There is always the danger, in looking for something in history (especially fairly recent history), that one will find it, that one will slight, that is, in the perspective of a century or so, something sufficiently like what one is, in contemporary terms, after, that the differences seem trivial or non-existent.

In the case of Butterfield at least, it is hard not to believe that Professor Hersey has gone armed with his own personal feelings and come back with them only slightly disguised as the contemporary response: "into this world—the world of 'smooth Mr Wilkins, dull Mr Smirke or facetious Mr Nash'—'into this world, not greatly disturbed by Pugin. All Saints burst like a Congo chieftain into a performance of *Les Sylphides*," an explosion, we must infer, of male barbarism into a world of effeminate dainties. Except for the sexual innuendo and of course the trondy imagery, this might be more a reaction of 1750 than of a hundred years later; yet Professor Hersey insists, "the best proof of this assertion is the contemporary reaction described above".

Actually the best proof does not come to much: to omit Street's abundant praise, for example, seems an obvious loading of the dice; and the tone even of the Ecclesiologists' criticism, which was the first to bring up, though only "germinally", the charge of "deliberate ugliness" which has hung over Butterfield ever since, does not correspond to Professor Hersey's. Enamored as he is of Pugin, Professor Hersey has not built a persuasive bridge from one period to the other. Though he inclines to lay down the law about what we should think of Victorian architecture, his book tends rather to blur our vision than to make the way clear. The way of course is anything but simple, and with any truth to reality be cannot appear so; the Victorian scene—in architecture as in most things—is a jigsaw full of loops and dead ends; cross-currents are everywhere, and what we really need now are some not too ambitious efforts at unambiguous generalizations. The grand generalizations could well put us to sleep for a time when the details of the map have been made clear.

Professor Hersey's characteristic habits of language seem to make certain kinds of response almost inevitable: the language determines quite narrowly the possible ranges of feeling which it can express and

in consequence those which the author can admit to. Sometimes it deflates analysis:

Compared to Cuddesdon's, Seddon's facade at Aberystwyth is almost stolid. Its comical adiposity could even reflect Burges's influence. Though the psychology is still one of hesitancy and discussion, the rhetoric of Cuddesdon and the Law Courts—so solemnly appropriate to Victorian religion and Victorian law—is here drained of meaning, inappropriate, even flippant. Shaw and Laytons are being prepared for.

Doubtless such a paragraph conveys more on the other side of the Atlantic than on this; but even if we accept that the Americanisms are not importunate without loss, this performance is mere vanity. It is impossible to believe, in such verbal company, that Professor Hersey has properly thought out what he means by the evidently important word "rhetoric", or precisely in what the asserted appropriateness lies. The concluding sentence is as cryptic that one suspects the use of a mental shorthand: the telegraphic manner certainly prevents communication and probably clear thought as well.

It is a pity that in the second, and main, part of his book Professor Hersey is so conscious of his (not easily compatible) roles of humorist and producer of final judgments that he appears incapable of impartial exploration. As the book proceeds, he depends to an increasing degree on generalizations for which the evidence is conflicting or simply not there. And by the end there may well be as many notions of Professor Hersey's conception of High Victorian Gothic as there are readers. Of one prominent building we are told that it was "High Victorian Gothic in its centripetal eclecticism, its didactic purpose, its progressiveness, its primitivism, its appreciation of vastness". On the other hand, Lamb "eschews the polychrome brick, and foreign detail of Butterfield and Street. He does borrow English thirteenth-century detail but uses it so originally as to be effectively anti-archaeological. Thus in a backhanded manner Lamb achieves both the universalizing and the specific qualities of High Victorian Gothic." Perhaps there were several High Victorian Gothics. But when the style "disappeared", we find to our surprise that it was not into the eclectic late Gothic of Bodley, Sedding and Austin, but into iron and glass, that plainly it was transformed before it got going by that well-known Gothic piece, the Crystal Palace (the prominent building referred to above); perhaps after all there was no High Victorian Gothic.

The most interesting chapters in Professor Hersey's rather cranky book are the first two, in which he explores some of the history of associationism as an "aesthetic doctrine". Probably a sharper distinction should be made here, between those who were associationists simply because they valued buildings (and other things) in part for qualities which happened to be associated with them, and those—the often rather queer visionaries—who made associationism into a principle of design. This distinction can be seen pretty clearly in the pre-Victorian period of the nineteenth century and the revolutionary years in France; and from these periods Professor Hersey has given us some extremely interesting quotations—not by any means all well known. But it cannot be maintained, as he does, that the same conviction after 1850, as Professor Hersey has not built a persuasive bridge from one period to the other. Though he inclines to lay down the law about what we should think of Victorian architecture, his book tends rather to blur our vision than to make the way clear. The way of course is anything but simple, and with any truth to reality be cannot appear so; the Victorian scene—in architecture as in most things—is a jigsaw full of loops and dead ends; cross-currents are everywhere, and what we really need now are some not too ambitious efforts at unambiguous generalizations. The grand generalizations could well put us to sleep for a time when the details of the map have been made clear.

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O. HOOD PHILLIPS:

Shakespeare and the Lawyers
214pp. Methuen. £3.

Seldom can a lawyer have spent as much time working on a subject outside the confines of academic and practical law as O. Hood Phillips has done here. It is, therefore, a pity that *Shakespeare and the Lawyers* is likely to be read only by Shakespearean scholars, students of Shakespeare and a few others. The book is not intended for the casual reader, who doesn't care, for example, whether or not there is a legal allusion to an execution for treason in King John, II.1:

Drawn in the skattering table of her eye,
Hang'd in the crowning wrinkle of her brow,
And quarter'd in her heart the doth epy
Himself love's a traitor.

—although it is curious that Professor Hood Phillips should have the slightest doubt that there is such an allusion.

Professor Hood Phillips is a distinguished academic lawyer with a great interest in Shakespeare and it is unfortunate that he has let us see so few of his own opinions on these subjects. The book's main intention is to give a comprehensive survey of what Shakespeare wrote about the law and lawyers and "what has been written particularly by lawyers about Shakespeare's life and works in relation to the law". In the publishers' blurb it is further stated that "The author has collated some very valuable material on an important aspect of the plays". Whether the aspect is important to the average reader or audience may be doubted, but subject to some qualification, this is an exact description of the book. It is what may be called a catalogue raisonné of the results of

the research and of the views of other scholars. Just as Mr Justice MacCardie's judgments contain a reference to nearly every relevant case decided before the action which he was trying and if not always sound, provide judges and practitioners with a splendid reference library in summary form, so Professor Hood Phillips has provided for Shakespearean writers a mine of useful information.

The qualifications, however, are these. Numerous as the references are (the bibliography contains about 300 books and articles) they are not exhaustive; furthermore, the reader must be on guard against omission. For example, the author deals with the identity (or lack of identity) of Mr W. H. and, after mentioning several suggestions, says that it remains a mystery, completely ignoring A. C. Rowse's well-publicized assertion (included not in the contributions to *The Times* but also in a book mentioned in the text and included in the bibliography) that there is no doubt whatever that Mr W. H. is Sir William Harvey. It is conceivable that this was omitted because the dogmatic nature of the assertion irked Professor Hood Phillips; but one would have thought that Dr Rowse's opinion should have at least been mentioned, only to show that it is mistaken. Secondly, a QC who was called to the Bar five years before Lord Darling died, can make the careless error of calling him a "Common Law" lawyer, and not a very good one at that. His chief claim to fame was that he was a "whiffing" lawyer, one who presides at his court and who is forward to reading in the papers the next morning.

The author emphasizes some interesting facts. For example, how many of his fellow lawyers are aware of the story of Secchi, the merchant,

and Caneda, the Jew, and of the fact that Shakespeare must have read it? In this story a wagger is made whereby the Jew, not the Gentile, stands to lose the pound of flesh to the merchant. And when Caneda loses the bet Secchi is warned that "he cut but a scruple or a grain more than his due, he would be hanged."

... if thou tak'st more,
Or less, than a just pound, he it but so
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attempts to speak of an author like Rousseau. One can hardly limit oneself to the quest for the idiosyncratic experience his writings reveal, if only because Jean-Jacques himself claimed to have devoted his life to the truth: *veritas impendens vero*. But philosophic commentary, unlike literary analysis of the author and his work, takes the text itself with utmost seriousness; in Foucault's words, it must "say, for the first time, what has always been said, and repeat tirelessly what was, nevertheless, never said."

Professor Grimsley's introduction is a model of the traditional commentary. Following the structure of the *Social Contract* with care, basing his analysis on a judicious use of the secondary literature, illuminating the relationship between Rousseau and his philosophic predecessors or contemporaries—throughout he performs faithfully the prime responsibility of the philosophic commentator, namely to set forth clearly the text, without judging it from a perspective of supposedly higher wisdom. His edition will be of use to those who wish to focus on the *Social Contract*.

This is not to say, of course, that Professor Grimsley's analysis is "definitive" in any sense. As M. Foucault has pointed out, it is not in the nature of commentaries to be definitive or final. Hence it is instructive to compare Louis Althusser's incisive commentary on Book I, chapter VI of the *Social Contract*, which appeared in *L'Impeccable de Jean-Jacques Rousseau* (an issue of

Les Cahiers pour l'Analyse, the journal of the Cercle Épistémologique de l'Ecole Normale Supérieure).

M. Althusser develops what will be called a "structuralist" analysis of the implicit logic of Rousseau's political thought, focusing on a series of what he calls *décalages* (an elusive word one is tempted to translate as "gaps" in the explicit argument) rather than as "logical contradictions". M. Althusser admirably illustrates the consequences of Rousseau's conceptualization of the political thought, focusing on a "social contract" in which individuals surrender their "rights" to the community in the name of the "general will".

Of particular interest is his conclusion that the ultimate *décalage* on which Rousseau's political thought turns is the link between his theoretical formulation and the practical reality of groups in human societies. One could object that M. Althusser's commentary does Rousseau insufficient justice since Rousseau himself frequently made it abundantly clear that this gap was inherent in any political theory. Still, M. Althusser's argument reveals the implicit economic and social choices which underlie Rousseau's way of thinking about politics, and in so doing reminds us of the renewed insights opened by careful philosophic commentary.

While other commentaries on Rousseau could be cited with profit it is perhaps more interesting to note

how the study of Rousseau has recently been linked to the third "internal" principle of discourse discussed by M. Foucault: the "discipline". As M. Foucault puts it, scientific disciplines

are defined by groups of objects, methods, their corpus of propositions considered to be true, the interplay of rules and definitions, of techniques and tools: all these constitute a sort of anonymous system... without there being any question of their meaning or their validity being derived from whoever happened to invent them.

Of numerous examples of the reintegration of Rousseau's thought into contemporary scientific and philosophic disciplines, it will suffice to mention the issue of *Les Cahiers pour l'Analyse* entitled *Lévi-Strauss dans le dix-huitième siècle*. In addition to excellent essays by Jacques Derrida and Jean-Alphonse, the issue includes a reproduction of the 1817 edition of Rousseau's *Essai sur l'origine des langues*. As Charles Porset's critical edition of the same text also testifies, Rousseau's analysis of the origin of speech is increasingly seen as an integral part of the discipline which analyses the "systems of discourse"—a discipline which, as M. Foucault remarks, those who are weak on "vocabulary" often call "structuralism".

As M. Mosconi shows, in an insightful comparison of Condillac and Rousseau, Jean-Jacques's understanding of the origin of human speech represents one of the polar

approaches to epistemology as viewed from an evolutionary or developmental perspective. Even more revealing, however, is Jacques Derrida's study of the links between Rousseau's thought and the anthropology of Lévi-Strauss. It is not possible here to do justice to Derrida's essay in *Les Cahiers pour l'Analyse*—not to mention his *La faiblesse de la signification*—which incorporates this essay and includes a commentary on the *Kasai sur l'origine des langues*. In many ways, M. Derrida is one of the most profound of the so-called French "structuralists" since he returns to the persistent themes of Western epistemology with a trenchant and penetrating eye.

M. Derrida begins his comparison between Lévi-Strauss and Rousseau by pointing out a common critical theme: they share both attack ethnism as part of a general critique of modern society when compared with the purity of primitive life. But, as M. Derrida shows, this position reveals a hidden ethnocentrism of its own, since both Lévi-Strauss and Rousseau retain the view of a "logocentric metaphysics" characteristic of Western cultures. As M. Derrida points out in analysing a passage in Lévi-Strauss's *Tristes Tropiques*, the latter treats writing as a violation of the transparency of human speech, thereby indicating a preference for the immediacy and freedom of face-to-face society. This preference is, of course, easily linked in Rousseau (as indeed M. Starobinski's essay reminds us).

The importance and originality of M. Derrida's work lies in his critical look shared by Lévi-Strauss and Lévi-Strauss. By making human speech in itself a "system of differences" and a "system of differences" between signifier and signified, M. Derrida has been developed in the tradition of Pierre and Paul de Man, in returning to the integral part of the personal and ever-new discipline of philosophy.

In a sense, one can view M. Derrida's thought as a reaction to the thought of the French-Jacques as an authorial commentary on his own. M. Derrida, as for many of the scholars mentioned above, has written this book as a response to the continued dialogue between those who seek the truth in listening seriously to Rousseau's text and those who seek the truth in a fitting fulfillment of the text which Rousseau states in clear and unequivocal terms.

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To the Editor

DNB Omissions

Sir—Janet Adam Smith (November 3) has performed a real service in drawing attention to omissions in the *Dictionary of National Biography*. She may, incidentally, have been upon an idea for a fruitful labour game for the winter evenings ahead, suggesting names for inclusion. Not an easy game, either, as the DNB offers a marvellously varied selection, and yields up names far more often than not, the obscure as well as the obvious. But gaps there are, and Miss Adam Smith has indicated some that should be supported her plea for a supplement by mentioning a few more.

To the First World War poets she might have added the names of the brilliant Raymond Asquith (died 1916) and of Ivor Gurney (died 1937). Among many others who might be given consideration are: Dora Carrington (died 1932), Christopher Caudwell (died 1937), Aleister Crowley (died 1947), Caradoc Evans (Welsh writer, died 1945), F. L. Griggs (artist and Cotswold pioneer, died 1938), Nina Hammett (died 1956), Z. B. Havell (died 1934), Lady Christina Harrington (died 1929), A. H. Mackmurdo (architect, died 1942), Constance Mackiewicz (died 1927), H. T. Norton (mathematician, died 1937), Annie S. Swan (died 1943), A. J. A. Symons (*The Quest for Corvo*, died 1941), Hallam Tennyson, second Baron Tennyson (Governor-General of Australia, died 1928), and Stephen Tomlin (sculptor, died 1937).

My impression is that the main DNB was less sparing in its inclusions than the decennial supplements. It does seem to be a weakness, however, that selection should be made for all, and while a comprehensive revision is hardly necessary, a retrospective supplement surely is. Having welcomed the Supplement to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, may we now hope that the Oxford University Press will issue a similar volume for the DNB?

DOUGLAS MATTHEWS,
London Library, 14, James's
Square, London SW1X 4LG.

Sir—I cannot agree more with the points put forward by Janet Adam Smith in Viewpoint (November 3), concerning the lack of biographical information in the DNB about minor, but none the less important, literary personalities.

This, however, applies with even more force to many engineers and industrialists, whose contribution in material terms to the well-being and material progress of this country is of far greater importance than that of the neglected writers. I would never deny the need for biographical material about these writers, but this

need must not be allowed to cloud the problem.

There is no general biographical index of engineers and technologists, apart from the manuscript compilation of the late Engineer Captain, E. C. Smith, which is deposited in the Library of the Science Museum. In view of the great interest in industrial history, I wonder if it would not pay some enterprising publisher—or even the publisher of the DNB itself—to compile a biographical dictionary of engineering and technology, which would allow publication of material about the many important men who were missed out of the original DNB and the additional numbers which subsequent research has brought to light.

It is perhaps interesting to note that this lack of recognition for our great engineers and technologists is not a new one. In the March number of the *Civil Engineer and Architect's Journal* for 1839, the editor says: "While the biography of literary men has received full attention, although rarely presenting any object of interest, the lives of men of science, deeply unenvied as they are with the history of the pursuit in which they are engaged, have frequently remained unknown or too often neglected."

While on the subject of the DNB, I wonder if it would be possible for one of the facsimile publishers, or even the publisher of the DNB itself, to reissue the handy volume edition. The purchase of the standard edition, in addition to being expensive, means that valuable shelf space must be given up to its bulk, which in today's small houses presents a problem. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* was produced in the same form at about the same time (c. 1920). I am sure that many workers, both professional and amateur, would welcome the chance of acquiring a DNB in a form which fits their purse as well as their bookshelves.

A. P. WOOLRICH,
35 Bath Rd., Kewham, Bristol
BS18 1BY.

Sir—One does not have to be a sportsman or cricket-mad to be able to cite a few more, staggering omissions from the DNB than any of the names Janet Adam Smith offers (November 3). W. G. Grace, arguably the greatest cricketer the world has ever seen, and quite unarguably the greatest English cricketer, indeed one has often been baffled by the omission of his name, which could justify, if the editors were not so busy, the inclusion of such an omission. To include W. G. does not lead as a consequence to the inclusion of all manner of other comparatively minor players, or indeed of other sportsmen, unless of

WG's stature: and I personally call to mind none such.

ROWLAND BOWEN,
The Lantern, Mullion, near Hol-
ston, Cornwall.

Sir—Further to the comments in Viewpoint (November 3) regarding "accidental omissions" from the *Dictionary of National Biography*, Janet Adam Smith and many of your readers may be interested to know that the late Wilfred Partington was engaged on a compilation entitled *Lives Left Out*, intended to cope with this problem. Mr. Partington's original manuscript, containing several hundred entries, is deposited at Wimbeldon Public Library.

A. R. REDWAY,
19 West Gardens, Ewell, Epsom,
Surrey.

New OED

Sir—"A. J. Aiken's use of the word 'loosed' in reference to the work toward an Early Modern English Dictionary (October 27) may give a misleading impression to some of your readers. The need to devote limited financial resources solely to the *Middle English Dictionary* from 1940 to the present did cause a temporary suspension of work on the OED, but since 1966 we have been planning a series of short-term projects that will lead ultimately to an historical dictionary for the period from 1475 to 1700. The first step towards this goal will be the publication of an instalment of *Michigan Early Modern English Materials* in 1973. We share Oxford's opinion that a "well-worked out flexible policy" is needed in lexicographical work (October 20), and are proposing a scheme making use of computer networks and microfiche publication that will allow for inter-institutional and (eventually) international co-operation in illuminating the vocabulary of the Early Modern period.

RICHARD W. BALLEW,
JAMES W. DOWNER,
The Early Modern English Dictionary, Department of English, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA.

The Paris Peace Conference

Sir—Your review of Sir James Headlam-Morley's *A Memoir of the Paris Peace Conference 1919* (October 27) states that the Polish demand for Danzig was supported by the League of Nations. But this is a legend not borne out by history which is recorded by Lloyd George and Lord Balfour. Not only Balfour and Lord Balfour but also Sir James Headlam-Morley were strongly opposed to it from the beginning.

The official view of the Foreign Office was that the problem was set out in the Peace Policy Paper on Poland drafted by Sir James Headlam-Morley in 1918, in accordance with Balfour's instructions. This stated that there should be no Polish corridor separating East and West Prussia; and that Polish access to the sea should be secured by giving the Poles the small part of Neufahrwasser five miles north-west of Danzig, with guaranteed rights of transit through German territory which would enable them to reach the Baltic.

In Paris Sir James Headlam-Morley, as a result of pressure put upon him by Professor Lord, the very pro-Polish representative of the United States on the Polish Territorial Committee, completely changed his mind and agreed to make a joint Anglo-American proposal to the committee that Danzig together with a wide corridor of formerly German territory, should be given to the Poles. This, of course, was directly contrary to the declared Foreign Office view. It provoked strong criticism from Lord Hardinge and Sir Eyre Crowe as well as from Sir James Headlam-Morley, the all-mighty in his department, but in no uncertain terms. Nevertheless, Sir William Tyrrell, the British representative on the Polish Territorial Committee, raised no objections to it, and it formed the basis of the committee's recommendations on Danzig to the Supreme Council.

There followed the well-known clash between Lloyd George and the members of the committee which resulted in their recommendations being set aside, Danzig being made a free city and the Polish corridor being reduced in size.

There is another statement by your reviewer which I beg leave to query. He says that my father was neither a liberal nor an intellectual. It seems to me that he was both. He was a liberal not only by inclination and in his general approach to life, but also by family tradition and associations, and this on the German as well as the British side. His mother and through her his father were personal friends of the Empress Frederick and in close touch with the Liberal and anti-Bismarckian elements that surrounded her. His grandfather, Eyre Evans Crowe, leader-writer and later editor of the *Whig* journal the *Morning Chronicle*, was patronized by Palmerston and Lansdowne and his articles were sometimes mistaken for those of Bismarck himself. The Whig-Liberal connexion continued in the next generation and his son Sir Joseph Crowe entered the diplomatic service through the interest of Lord John Russell. My father himself, as a young man, was an ardent admirer of Gladstone and a believer in Home Rule, and down to the collapse of the Liberal party after the First World War he always voted Liberal.

Anyone with more intellectual tastes it is difficult to imagine. At home in six languages, a voracious reader all his life, he had a breadth of knowledge of history, literature, science, philosophy and in any walk of life. He perused everything that he wrote, spoke and believed, and it helps to explain the brilliant

and force of so many of his official memoranda. For his part, he also emerged in ordinary conversation, for there was as much of the serious scholar in him as in his spirit that knowledge of history and contemporary events, acute judgment and power of expression ran together with a kind of incoherence which it is easy to think of as a result of his mind not being able to cope with the task.

Words were direct and clear, but he was not a grammarian, and also before reaching the age of retirement, and therefore had time to write books. But he was extremely musical and as a pianist did in fact compose a deal of piano music. He was an accomplished pianist, and his intellectual life was taken up with music, and he was a very good interpreter of difficult to see how he could be criticized as unintellectual.

SIR LLOYD GEORGE,
St. Hilde's College, Oxford.

Our reviewer writes—I beg leave to Miss Crowe's expert knowledge of the archives, as it is a pity that the hard fact that Foreign Office Delegation, and its back-stage hesitations, were not officially and openly for the eyes of Danzig to Poland, which he has gone into the treaty if George had not resigned.

Crowe was certainly a liberal in the German sense, and perhaps a Whig. But I find it hard to think of him as a liberal in the sense in which the word was used in England in the Lloyd George epoch. The "Intellectual" is troubling, and should never dream of calling Crowe "unintellectual". But one who knew both men would have known that Crowe was not—nor necessarily an intellectual in the sense that Crowe was not.

'Final Appeal'

Sir—What we found particularly depressing about the review of *The Final Appeal* (October 20) was not its naked hostility and maligning of its subject, but the apparent attempt to grasp the essence of its methodology.

First, your reviewer, in his attempt to analyze the content of appeals and replies, begins with a hypothesis that figures purporting to show the number of issues raised in each election since 1900. We do not know the number of issues raised in each election since 1900. We do not know the number of issues raised in each election since 1900. We do not know the number of issues raised in each election since 1900.

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'The General Strike'

Sir—Your reviewer of Christy Parman's *The General Strike* (November 3) states: "A duke and an intellectual of 1940 were Special Constables." Perhaps it would be well to get the record straight. The Duke of Devon, along with the Provost and all the masters, were three days before the end of the strike, but none of them were called for any duty. As the Provost, Dr. Rhodes James, was aged and infirm, and the Headmaster was not a legend, but a hard fact, it is a pity that the hard fact that Foreign Office Delegation, and its back-stage hesitations, were not officially and openly for the eyes of Danzig to Poland, which he has gone into the treaty if George had not resigned.

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